

St Matthew's RC High School

# Anti-Bullying Policy

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Reviewed: July 2016

To be reviewed: July 2018

## Anti-Bullying Policy

St Matthew's RC High School is dedicated to promoting a distinctive Catholic ethos by upholding the teachings of the Catholic Church. This means that everything we aim to achieve will be based on the teachings and practice of the Catholic Church.

Our motto is "Quaerite primum regnum dei" - "Seek first the Kingdom of God" - and our aim is to achieve this motto in our school life. We will work to build God's Kingdom and be happy together because we believe that Jesus died and rose again for us and that He is always present in our school and in our world.

We are committed to developing the full potential of every individual, regardless of culture, race, religion, disability, or special need by creating a safe, orderly environment where all members of the community work diligently in a spirit of co-operation and treat each other with courtesy and respect at all times.

Our primary role is to educate children and we uphold the principle outlined in the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales (2000) that:

***"Education is holy ... the process of teaching and learning is a holy act"***

Everyone at St. Matthew's views bullying as a very serious issue. All staff, pupils, parents, families and visitors should be aware that bullying will not be tolerated at the school and that we strive to ensure that St. Matthew's is a safe, supportive and understanding environment for all our pupils and staff, where everyone understands and promotes the belief that bullying is unacceptable. All incidents of bullying will be dealt with in a professional, consistent and positive manner.

### What is bullying?

Bullying is any behaviour which makes another person feel unhappy, frightened or threatened.

Bullying can be:

- a) **Physical** – hitting, kicking, fighting, stealing, intimidating and damaging belongings.
- b) **Verbal** – calling names, threatening, teasing, insulting.
- c) **Emotional** – leaving out, spreading rumours, humiliating, tormenting.
- d) **Cyber bullying** – through mobile phones, the internet or social media.

Bullying can have a wide range of effects on everyone involved. For the person being bullied it can lead to low self-esteem, depression and self-exclusion (Mellor DFEE 1991). For the person who is bullying it is very likely that they have been or are bullied themselves. Many bullies often go on to become criminals in later life (Olweus DFEE 1991).

## **Strategies to develop a positive and safe climate**

- a) Anti-bullying curriculum content in VT/ RE/English/Humanities
- b) Anti-Bullying policy promoted throughout the curriculum and through notices on corridors and classrooms
- c) Proactive behaviour for learning strategies used by staff
- d) Staff training to include all support staff.
- e) Support classes in conflict management/relationships/life skills for those vulnerable to bullying or identified as a bully.
- f) Progress Leaders to be responsible for co-ordinating anti-bullying policy in their year group.
- g) Use of pastoral support staff to support students.
- h) Promotion of peer support programmes.
- i) Monitoring and evaluation of current policy.
- j) Policy shared with pupils and parents via website and other school communication.

## **Anyone reporting that they are being bullied will be:**

- a) Supported by their Progress Leader / Pastoral Manager / pastoral support staff and Form Tutor
- b) Listened to in a confidential and safe environment
- c) Invited to suggest practical responses, including a restorative programme
- d) Assured the incident will be investigated, recorded and a response given within two school days
- e) Kept informed at all stages of any action being taken against the person who has bullied them
- f) Offered access to a support class if appropriate

## **Anyone identified as bullying will be:**

- a) Interviewed by a member of the Pastoral team
- b) Given a copy of the interview within three school days
- c) Offered a restorative programme if appropriate (written apology/making amends to the person, attending an anti-bullying class promoting the school's anti-bullying policy)
- d) Dealt with following the school's disciplinary policy if appropriate (letter/meeting with parents, interview with Pastoral Team, detention, short term exclusion)
- e) Informed that a record will be kept of the incident and outcome.
- f) Persistent bullying behaviour will be treated in line with the schools behaviour policy with consequences leading up to, and including, permanent exclusion.

## **Incidents where it is unclear who is right or wrong**

In many incidents of bullying it is hard to identify who is right or wrong. In these circumstances it is advisable to listen to and support those involved in a non-judgemental manner, encouraging them to reach an agreement between themselves as to future conduct. This should where possible be a written agreement supported and monitored by peer supporters or school buddies.

## **The reporting and recording of incidents**

All reporting and recording of incidents of bullying will be entered into the electronic behaviour reporting system IRIS, including details about the nature of the bullying and who the victims and offenders are. All follow-ups relating to the incident reported, including reviews will be added as an attachment to the original incident.

Following two reviews where there has not been a need to take action an incident slip stating 'no further action' will be added.

All records will be reviewed regularly by an Assistant Headteacher alongside the relevant Progress Leader and Pastoral Manager.